

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR ENRG VE

SUBJ: OFFICIAL REACTION TO NEW YORK TIMES STORY CONCERNING

US GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN OIL NATIONALIZATION

NEGOTIATIONS

1. EL UNIVERSAL OF JULY 2 REPORTS FOREIGN MINISTER RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM AS HAVING COMMENTED TO REPORTERS FOLLOWING THE REGULAR THURSDAY CABINET MEETING THAT NEITHER THE US NOR ANY OTHER COUNTRY IS INTERVENING IN VENEZUELA'S NATIONALIZATION OF ITS PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, AND THAT HE WAS NOT AWARE OF FORMER AMBASSADOR MCCLINTOCK'S REPORT TO THE US GOVERNMENT ON THIS MATTER. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DAILY JOURNAL REPORTS ESCOVAR AS STATING, "I AM NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE COMPLETE (NEW YORK TIMES) REPORT... I UNDERSTAND IT WAS A PERSONAL OPINION OF MR. MCCLINTOCK. I DONT THINK IT HAD ANY OFFICIAL ASPECT." EL NACIONAL REPORTS THAT UNSPECIFIED OFFICIALS IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND HYDROCARBONS HAD ASSURED THAT THE US "HAS NOT TAKEN ANY STEPS" RELATIVE TO THE NATIONALIZATION PROCESS, THAT "WASHINGTON HAS NOT MADE ANY SUGGESTION" AS TO THE NATIONALIZATION PROCESS, AND THAT NO "OFFICIAL, FORMAL MEETINGS" BETWEEN THE US AND VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN HELD TO DISCUSS THE UNCLASSIFIED

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MATTER.

2. THESE COMMENTS FOLLOWED WIDE COVERAGE IN THE LOCAL PRESS
JULY 1 OF WIRE SERVICE REPORTS OF A NEW YORK TIMES STORY THAT
EARLIER THIS YEAR FORMER AMBASSADOR MCCLINTOCK HAD RECOMMENDED
THE USG THAT IT PLAY A DIRECT ROLE IN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE
GOV AND THE OIL COMPANIES CONCERNING NATIONALIZATION OF THE
PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.

SHLAUDEMAN

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